

The Family

THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN.

"Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach."—Heb. 13:13.

By Margaret Mauro.

I can not give it up,
The little world I know,
The innocent delights of youth,
The things I cherish so!
'Tis true, I love my Lord,
And want to do his will;
And, oh, I may enjoy the world
And be a Christian still!

I love the hour of prayer,
I love the hymns of praise;
I love the blessed Word that tells
Of God's redeeming grace.
But I am human still!
And while I dwell on earth
God surely will not grudge the hours
I spend in harmless mirth!

These things belong to youth
And are its natural right—
My dress, my pastimes and my friends,
The merry and the bright.
My Father's heart is kind!
He will not count it ill
That my small corner of the world
Should please and hold me still.

And yet—"outside the camp"—
'Twas there my Saviour died!
It was the world that cast him forth
And saw him crucified.
Can I take part with those
Who nailed him to the tree?
And where his name is never praised
Is there the place for me?

Nay, world! I turn away,
Though thou seem fair and good;
That friendly outstretched hand of thine
Is stained with Jesus' blood.
If in thy least device
I stoop to take a part,
All unaware, thine influence steals
God's presence from my heart.

I miss my Saviour's smile
Whene'er I walk thy ways;
Thy laughter drowns the Spirit's voice
And chokes the springs of praise.
If e'er I turn aside
To join thee for an hour,
The face of Christ grows blurred and dim,
And prayer has lost its power.

Farewell! Henceforth my place
Is with the Lamb who died,
My Sovereign, while I have thy love,
What can I want beside?
Thyself, dear Lord, art now
My free and loving choice,
"In whom, though now I see thee not,
Believing, I rejoice."

Shame on me that I sought
Another joy than this,
Or dreamt a heart at rest with thee
Could crave for earthly bliss!
These vain and worthless things,
I put them all aside;

His goodness fills my longing soul,
And I am satisfied.

Lord Jesus, let me dwell
"Outside the camp" with thee!
Since thou art there, then there alone
Is peace and home for me.
Thy dear reproach to bear.
I'll count my highest gain,
Till thou return, my banished King,
To take thy power and reign.
—New York Observer.

THE PECULIAR CHOICE OF PERSIS.

By Harriet Lummis Smith.

Mrs. Armitage reached a well-shaped hand across the back of the pew. "I'm glad to see you," she exclaimed. "I felt sure that Grace Church would claim you as soon as I heard that you had moved to Twentieth street. Not that it is so very near," she added, "but the street cars make it very convenient."

The morning service was just over. The rich tone of the organ rose jubilant and compelling above the voices of the congregation, decorously exchanging greetings. Persis looked about her with frank appreciation of the charm of the scene, the harmonious tints of the frescoes, the kaleidoscopic beauty of the well-dressed people, moving leisurely down the aisles. It was a bright Sunday, and the pews were full. The atmosphere of the place was that of peace and prosperity.

Persis fell into step with Mrs. Armitage and made answer to the lady's cordial greeting. "Oh, I don't mind being at a little distance from the church I attend. I'd rather have a bracing walk than only be a block or two away. But I haven't quite made up my mind yet where I shall take my letter. You see that the First Church is at about the same distance from us as Grace."

"My dear child!" The expression of Mrs. Armitage's face indicated amusement and consternation in about equal parts. "Have you attended service there yet?" she queried.

"Not yet," said Persis, wondering. "Then, I won't expostulate," the lady laughed. "One visit will decide the question. You see, my dear," she went on, apparently unable in spite of her assurance to leave the matter to Persis herself, "the days of usefulness for the First Church are over. It is situated in that boarding house section where people come and go, and nobody stays long enough to get a real interest in anything. I'm sorry for the pastor, poor man, but it is only a question of time when they will have to give up. Our church is very fortunately situated, and we have a splendid class of people. You'll enjoy them."

"I'm sure I should be happy here," Persis answered warmly. Her family had just moved into the city from the suburbs, and this was her first Sunday. Her new home was midway between two churches of the denomination to which she belonged, and she had made up her mind to visit both at least once before

deciding with which one she would cast her lot. It was characteristic of Persis that she adhered to this determination, even after Mrs. Armitage had revealed to her the true conditions of things at the First Church.

That the picture she had drawn was not an exaggerated one was plain to Persis as she sat the following Sunday in the congregation of the old down-town church which was striving so valiantly to live up to its past reputation. The absence of the "family pew," the occupants ranging from the substantial business man at one end down to the juvenile member of the household but recently promoted to the dignity of church-going, was noticeable. Nineteenth of the congregation were young people, clerks, students, stenographers, the majority of them with that air of restless alertness characteristic of the semi-homeless element of the great cities.

The sermon was an earnest one, simple and straightforward, of the sort to appeal to the shifting, changing audience which met at the First Church Sunday after Sunday. Yet the attention of Persis wandered more than once. Mrs. Armitage's words came back to her, "The First Church has outlived its usefulness." She looked about at the rows of uplifted youthful faces, the faces of young people, many of them without the restraint of home influence, far from the help of a father's counsel or a mother's care, and she caught herself wondering what greater responsibility rested on the church than that of ministering to needs such as these. The First Church still had a work to do. But, though the harvest was plentiful, the laborers were few.

Two girls in the pew in front of her spoke to each other hurriedly as the benediction was finished. "Mamie, do try to speak to that girl in the red jacket before she gets out. I've invited her here twenty times, and she never came before. Ask her to the young people's meeting to-night."

"All right, Maggie." Mamie hurried away in pursuit of the girl in the red jacket, who was making for the door with as much directness as if she had been an evil-doer bent on escape. The other greeted Persis cordially and invited her to come again, evidently assuming her to belong to the changing population of the neighborhood.

But the minister knew better. He stood by the door when she went out, shaking hands, recognizing with extraordinary quickness faces he had seen before, throwing into his brief question the cordiality and warmth which he hoped might help to make his church something of a home for these hurrying hundreds of young people, with only the influence of a cheap boarding house to stand between them and the world's temptations. But when Persis's turn came he looked at her hard as he held her hand, recognizing at once that she was a representative of a different environment.

"You are a stranger here, are you not?"